

News Release

RSVP Volunteers Share the Gift of Time in Celebration of National Senior Corps Week  
May 7-11, 2012

By Itollems on Monday, April 30, 2012

Time does not stand still when RSVP Volunteers are on the job! In fact, for 41 years, Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), part of the Minnesota Senior Corps, has worked to improve lives and strengthen communities through the skills and experience of men and women age 55 and above. In celebration of National Senior Corps Week, May 7-11, 2012, RSVP of the Red River Valley, sponsored by the University of Minnesota, Crookston, tallied the time donated by RSVP volunteers last year in the counties it serves.



Within the seven-county region last year, 728 volunteers were active, contributing a whopping 82,862 hours of service. In 2011 Polk County volunteers contributed 36,015 hours, Marshall County 12,471 hours, Norman County 9,543 hours, Kittson County 9,082 hours, Red Lake County 6,076 hours, Roseau County 7,452 hours and Pennington County 2,223 hours.

RSVP Director Jan Aamoth and Program Coordinator Tammy Sykes work with volunteers to match interests of volunteers with community needs. Aamoth states, "RSVP is changing as the Baby Boom generation retires and as community needs change. In the past year RSVP has added the Handyman and Groceries to Go Programs in several communities. These programs are focused on keeping people living independently in their own homes longer."

Another new priority area is placing volunteers in schools to assist with literacy programs. Sykes states, "RSVP recently piloted a Reading Buddies Program matching volunteers with early readers. Many of our volunteers really enjoy working with children and connecting the generations is a positive for the children and the volunteers."

In addition to RSVP, Senior Corps includes the Senior Companion Program as well as the Foster Grandparent Program. The three programs work together to meet community challenges. If you are interested in finding out what volunteer opportunities are available in your community contact the RSVP office at 218-281-8289.

The benefits of volunteering are many: People who volunteer live longer and healthier lives, experience less depression, and have lower incidence of heart disease. Communities become unified and strengthened and states and communities reap monetary benefits through donated time and service. To learn more, visit [www.umcrookston.edu/rsvp](http://www.umcrookston.edu/rsvp).

Today the University of Minnesota, Crookston delivers 26 bachelor's degree programs, 18 minors, and 36 concentrations, including 10 online degrees, in the areas of agriculture and natural resources; business; liberal arts and education; and math, science and technology. With an enrollment of 1,600 undergraduates from 25 countries and 40 states, the Crookston campus offers a supportive, close-knit atmosphere that leads to a prestigious University of Minnesota degree. "Small Campus. Big Degree." To learn more, visit [www.umcrookston.edu](http://www.umcrookston.edu).

*In the photo:*  
*Front row, left to right: Marion Bjorgan, Red Lake Falls, Tammy Sykes, RSVP Program Coordinator, Glenice Johnson, Thief River Falls. Back row left to right, Chuck Larson, Crookston, Donna Rae Heiraas, Twin Valley, Jan Aamoth, RSVP Director, Aase Hammes, Stephen and Elden Johnson, Hallock.*

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